

The South African Outlook

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CONTENTS

	Page		Page
THE OUTLOOK ..	17	<i>A South African Study</i>	
Conference of Church		<i>of the Alcohol Question</i>	31
Leaders :—Pretoria, 17th-		<i>Unwilling Journey : A</i>	
19th November 1953 ..	20	<i>Diary from Russia</i> ..	31
In Memoriam—Professor		<i>The Meaning of</i>	
G. F. Dingemans	27	<i>'Ecumenical'</i> ..	32
"Settler's Heritage" ..	28	<i>Why I believe my Bible</i>	32
South African Institute		<i>The Christian and his</i>	
of Race Relations ..	29	<i>Bible</i> ..	32
New Books		<i>The Acts of the Apostles</i>	32
<i>South Africa in a</i>		<i>Paul's letters to his</i>	
<i>changing World</i> ..	31	<i>friends</i> ..	32

The South African Outlook

The only significant religion is one which starts with man in his environment. No religion will submit to detachment from life.

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Horizontal Apartheid means ruin.

We are indebted to the Administrator of the Orange Free State, Mr. Fouche, for as clear an expression as we have seen of the danger in which we are entangled because of the kind of apartheid which prevails in South Africa. He was opening the recent congress of the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs in Bloemfontein, and assumed the role of a candid friend of that organisation. There was urgent need, he said, that exponents of apartheid as a national policy should lose no time in giving proof that it was an honest attempt to find a just solution to our great race problem, and not merely a delaying action in opposition to a different theory. Europeans must no longer procrastinate over a practical acceptance of the sacrifices which apartheid demands of them. Suggesting that it was the fact of his retardedness rather than any system of oppression that landed the Non-European in his inferior position, he went on to say, according to the press report :

" Gradually, as a result of reigning conditions, a process of horizontal division came about; this division, if it must continue to exist, may well be called ' apartheid ' of a certain type but an ' apartheid ' which will keep the Non-European down until the hour of explosion and is a type of ' apartheid ' that shocks the thinking Non-European deeply.

" This is a type of ' apartheid,' if it must continue to exist, which must lower the educated Non-European to

the status of an agitator. It is also a type of ' apartheid ' which conflicts with the Christian and humane feelings of the Europeans.

" This is a type of ' apartheid ' which places an unbearable burden on the shoulders of the European taxpayers. It is the type of ' apartheid ' which brings South Africa into disfavour with a section of world opinion.

" This is the type of ' apartheid ' which is doing South Africa incalculable damage economically. It is the type of ' apartheid ' which, perhaps, through misguided diplomacy, can be kept going for many years, with concessions here and there and a mass of promises.

" We often hear that we have always had ' apartheid ' in South Africa. That may be so, but it is the type of racial division which we may not allow to continue because it is turning our beautiful fatherland into a hell on earth."

* * * *

SABRA disappoints.

For the student of human relationships in the sub-continent and of the conflict of ideas in regard to them, the annual congress of the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs is one of the interesting events of the year. The Bureau stands frankly for apartheid, and, in that it exists to defend and justify a certain point of view against different ones, is partisan rather than scientific. We look to it to proclaim the pure gospel, the true doctrine of the apostles of apartheid, undiluted and undefiled by the compromises of the politicians. It is of real value that this should be offered to us by trained and earnest minds which are not compelled to keep one eye on a somewhat emotional electorate.

The press reports of this year's congress indicate that the addresses offered were no less interesting than usual. Some arresting things were said. For instance, the Head of the Division of Economics and Markets maintained that the Reserves would never be made self-sufficient by the encouragement of African small farmers. This opens up to view a very serious prospect and calls for verification and study. From the same authority it was learnt that African farm employees are increasing in numbers and are also becoming highly skilled and consequently more productive. (In contrast to this was the pathetic picture drawn for the delegates by one of our senators, selected for his " thorough acquaintance with the reasonable wants and wishes of Non-Europeans," who claimed that because

of the more favourable cash wages paid in the towns only the crumbs were left on the farms. "We sit," he lamented, "with the cripples, the old women and children, the chickens, the pigs, and the rest.")

Speakers who discussed the farm labour situation in relation to the apartheid doctrine were in many cases logical and clear. They pointed out that with the continued employment on farms of more and more Africans from outside the Union, South Africa was in danger of becoming less and less a white man's country: consequently the influx should be halted. But since labour of some kind was essential—and many supported the argument by claiming also that African labour was, in any case, very inefficient—an active programme of wisely selected white immigration was obviously needed for the maintenance of white civilisation. Yet, surprisingly, when it came to the job of making up its mind, the congress refused to pass a resolution calling for a check upon the influx of "foreign" Natives into the Union, and by a large majority rejected another which recommended that serious consideration should be directed to the importation of suitable European immigrants. The only possible conclusion to be drawn from such decisions seems to be that it was not the plain language of the facts that mattered with the congress so much as prejudice, not public spirit so much as self-interest. This is very perplexing to the many people who have hoped that out of the scientific study of the facts that constitute this great all-overshadowing problem in our life as a nation, whatever the original angle of approach to it, we might be led to something like a common mind and an agreed understanding of the landmarks along the road forward. It is very disappointing.

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A most encouraging experiment with Tuberculosis Patients.

After a year's controlled experimentation with four hundred patients the Union Health Department is able to report very favourably on what is proving to be an effective bit of strategy in the stern campaign against tuberculosis. The patients involved were African workers who were diagnosed as having tuberculosis in an active but non-infectious form. The effort was undertaken because of the impossibility of finding the thousands of beds required if such cases are to be given the usual treatment in hospitals. Moreover hospitalisation interferes so radically with the family life of the patient, and means such loss of income where a wage-earner is involved. What has been done is perhaps best explained in the words of Dr. Dormer, who is at the head of the Health Ministry's Anti-tuberculosis Section.

"It became essential" he says, "that we find another method of handling these people—a method, too, which

preferably did not disrupt and break up the patient's family life.

"It was decided to carry out a carefully controlled experiment in which workers with active but non-infectious tuberculosis would be kept at their jobs, preferably at their normal duties, and treated on the spot.

"We supply the drugs, the factory supplies the nurses and the treatment. The experiment has now been in progress for over a year and so far every patient has responded satisfactorily.

"Where a patient is found to be suffering from infectious tuberculosis we put him in hospital—but get him out again as soon as we can.

"The majority are non-infectious within a few months of entering hospital and we then send them home and back to work. This enables us to use our present number of beds three or four times as often as before."

By this plan the cost to the State of £450 a year for a bed patient is reduced to £8 for outside treatment, and the patient can continue to support his family.

* * * *

The Institute of Architects takes a hand.

For some years past the Institute of South African Architects has interested itself in the great problem of African housing in the townships. It has very rightly been moved by the conviction that it has a contribution to make towards resolving many of the difficulties that beset it, alike in regard to the reduction of costs and to the improvement of design. Some years ago it made a grant from its funds of five hundred pounds to the National Building Research Institute to assist its investigations into the former aspect, and last year it organised a Union-wide competition among architects with a view to securing houses that will combine economy, convenience and attractiveness. Sixty-two designs have been submitted and recently judged: they show quite clearly that good-looking homes need not cost any more or even as much as the ugly stereotyped ones which can look so depressing. Some of the designs submitted should not cost more than a hundred pounds, yet they are far removed in appearance from the mean but more costly hovels that have too often satisfied our municipal authorities and produced the dismal, monotonous, soul-destroying landscapes which make up so many town locations.

And now, having successfully secured a number of satisfactory and pleasing designs, the institute is generously offering them without charge to Non-Europeans who want to build their own homes—a gesture which cannot be too highly commended. An exhibition of all the designs submitted in the different classes specified is to be held at the School of Architecture at the Witwatersrand University from the fifteenth to the nineteenth of this month.

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Christian Council Plans.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Christian Council, held in Port Elizabeth on January 8th and 9th under the presidency of the Archbishop of Cape Town, it was decided to summon a full meeting of the Council at Bloemfontein for the 18th, 19th, and 20th of May. The last of such meetings was held in Cape Town in January, 1952, and at it a statement was issued urging the Government to take steps which should lead to the holding of a National Convention. This statement said that if the Government was not willing to do this, the Executive Committee of the Council should initiate preparations for a Convention of the Churches. At the recent meeting at Port Elizabeth it was agreed to report that, in view of the conference of church leaders already summoned by the Federal Missionary Council of the Dutch Reformed Church and the assurance of a larger and more representative conference at an early date, no further steps should be taken in the matter of a Convention. The final decision will be with the Council when it meets in Bloemfontein.

Much concern was felt by the Executive over the fact that the audited financial statements for 1952/3 show that the expenses of administration have exceeded income by £200 a year. It has been possible to meet this deficit from a small accumulated reserve, but that is now exhausted. The Secretary-Treasurer was instructed to prepare a full explanatory statement for circulation to member churches and missionary societies, together with a request for increased affiliation fees. A copy of this statement will appear in the next issue of the *Outlook*.

Two important committees were appointed by the Executive :—

(a) to study the implications of the Bantu Education Act and, if possible, to obtain an advance copy of the new regulations, with a view to making any representations deemed necessary in regard to them before they are promulgated.

(b) to study the report on religious liberty published by the International Missionary Council in 1945, so that legislation in South Africa and trends in administrative action may be studied in the light of internationally accepted principles.

It is hoped that the personnel of these two committees will be announced shortly, and that they will be able to report at the meeting of the Council at Bloemfontein in May.

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A first-rate Choice.

The voters concerned in the choice of Southern Rhodesia's European Representative of African Interests in the parliament of the Central African Federation are to be congratulated on having elected the Rev. Percy Ibbotson,

O.B.E. by a substantial majority. They have secured a man who has very special qualifications for a special position. For the past thirteen years he has been the key man in the Federation of African Welfare Societies as its Organising Secretary, and is in consequence uniquely equipped for his new responsibilities. Fortunately he will not have to sever his connection with this work since it is planned to secure a senior assistant for him in it as soon as possible.

* * * *

The late Rev. D. A. McDonald.

We regret to announce the death of the Rev. David Alexander McDonald, formerly missionary at Gooldville, Sibasa, North Transvaal, which took place in Edinburgh on 29th December. Mr. McDonald was born in November 1866, so that he had reached the ripe age of eighty-seven. His career, which has been in large part told in his book *With Christ in Africa*, was a remarkable one. Mr. McDonald arrived in Africa more than sixty years ago. After service at various stations connected with the United Free Church of Scotland, he went to Sibasa in the Transvaal and worked among the Venda. There he and his like-minded wife, a German missionary with nursing qualifications, acquired great influence and built up a station noted for evangelism, and for medical and educational service. Owing to Mrs. McDonald's ill-health they retired in 1931 and settled in Edinburgh, in a house which they characteristically named "Gooldville." Mrs. MacDonald died in 1950. During his later years Mr. McDonald was one of the best-known churchmen in the city of Edinburgh, being assiduous in his attendance at church courts and in various forms of Christian activity. Blessed with means in his closing years, he gave handsome sums to various Christian causes. Not long since he gave over £900 to the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa for prizes to be given to meritorious theological students. He established a bursary at New College, Edinburgh, to assist a divinity student preparing for the foreign field. To New College he gave an organ in memory of his wife. One of his last public actions was to offer £1,000 if forty other donors would do the same, and so clear off the debt of the Church of Scotland's Foreign Mission Committee.

Mr. McDonald was of an active, happy disposition, with a mind alert and purposeful. He was constantly seeking to help individuals by spiritual counsel, and writing letters in a penmanship which was the envy of many younger people. We never knew an individual who was able to put more on a post card or in a brief letter because of his minute and beautiful handwriting. Through all he had one consuming interest—the expansion of the Kingdom of God. To a host of friends and converts he will long remain a grateful memory.

Conference of Church Leaders:—Pretoria, 17th-19th November, 1953

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE MISSION POLICY OF THE "NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE" CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

By The Rev. C. B. Brink

*Moderator of the Synod of the "Nederduitse Hervormde of Gereformeerde" Church in the Transvaal, Chairman
of the Federal Council of "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches in South Africa.*

(This is a translation, approved by Ds. Brink, of the original paper which was read in Afrikaans).

IT is a significant fact that in the past there was seldom if ever any discussion of the fundamental principles of our mission policy. What discussion there was, was usually about mission practice. The question whether the power of the Gospel suffices to determine the relationship, not only between individuals, but also between groups of different races, has become a question of immediate interest for the Church only in recent years. Prof. J. du Plessis's book about the theory and practice of missionary work was published in 1932. This is a fairly detailed treatment of the subject, but it contains nothing about race relations as such and no formulation of the principles that the Christian Church applies or should apply. The actual history of the missionary work of the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches in South Africa begins with a resolution of the first Synod in 1824, making provision for the ordination of missionaries; but it was only in 1937 that the formulation of certain principles and the formal acceptance of a *Mission Policy* stating these principles clearly, were reached.

It must not be concluded from this that the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches have been performing their missionary work for all those years in a haphazard fashion, taking no account of the fundamental principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Consciousness of the fact that the Christian mission makes demands of principle was always present and ever stimulated the Christian mind; but the necessity to give an account of these to ourselves in such a way as to be able to state them to the world, arose only recently. The existence of two great racial groups side by side in one country for three centuries, however, actually served to make our Church formulate its mission policy even before critical world conditions made such a thing necessary in other parts of the world. The "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches, therefore, are not facing a totally new problem which is only now having attention.

It is further a matter of importance that the Churches in Southern Africa are mostly dependent on their own resources in this matter. As a result of criticism, from several sides, of the policies current in our country and in particular of the policy of the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches, there has been and still is a serious searching of heart amongst us. We had to ask ourselves whether, in

spite of all our zeal, we were so grossly in error and had so little of the spirit of Christ in us that acknowledged church leaders abroad could condemn us so strongly. Also, we tried to look round in the world in order to find out what was happening and was being done in other countries. Could we learn something from India? Indonesia? The Americas? These questions were seriously put to visitors of goodwill, from whom we expected counsel and guidance. But answer there was none, save that all agreed that the Churches in South Africa were in an unique position and could scarcely follow the examples of other countries. The Christian Churches outside South Africa, therefore, have no ready-made recipe to offer us and cannot say: "Brethren you should do thus." They can indeed help us to attain to clarity about the Christian principles to be applied in our missionary work and our preaching of God's Kingdom; but in the actual application of these we stand virtually alone.

There is a third preliminary remark that I must make. The commission responsible for arranging this conference was kind enough to allow me to formulate for myself the subject allotted to me. This is: *The Fundamental Principles of the Mission Policy of the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches in South Africa*. This I preferred to the original formulation, to wit: "*What do we mean by fundamental Christian principles?*" The reason for the change in wording is clear. Every principle, deduced from the Gospel, is fundamental for the Church of Jesus Christ. And there are among these principles some more applicable to the individual's personal life, others that should govern our social life. It is further the task of the Christian Church to proclaim the Kingdom of God. It must adhere to its sublime calling. In South Africa a certain racial policy is followed and several others are being advocated. But to demand from the Church of Christ that it itself should prescribe rules governing the political relations of races and groups, is to demand too much. It is no more the duty of the Church to say what form the constitution should take—monarchy, dictatorship or republic—than it is its task to state what should be the final racial policy of the country. The Church must proclaim the truth of God's Word and arouse the Christian conscience therewith; it must demand

that justice shall be accorded to all ; it must condemn evil and commend God's good will. But it dare not let itself be tempted to descend to a task to which it is not called. Bearing in mind the admonition of St. Paul : " Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Jesus Christ " (Col. 2, 8), the Church may well reply to the many demands made on it today : " I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down " (Neh. 6, 3). The Christian Church itself has in the past given a great impetus to an un-Christian humanism in having, as Emil Brunner says, " for centuries done what it should not have done." The Church has mixed the truth of God with the truth of the world. (" *Christianity and Civilisation*," page 83). This error we dare not commit in South Africa regarding the question under discussion. The Church will be undertaking too much if it would prescribe to the State in detail how it should arrange to deal justly with the educational, economic, political and other aspirations of the several racial groups. Unto Caesar should be left that which belongs to Caesar.

I wish, however, to be properly understood. The " *Nederduitse Gereformeerde* " Churches accept Holy Scripture as the all-sufficient and infallible Word of God and hold that the authority of Scripture is normative for all of man's political, social, cultural and religious concerns. The *principia* for the whole of human life are given us in Scripture (Bavinck : *Dogmatiek* 1, page, 416, published by J. H. Kok 1928). If, therefore, the Church is true to its calling it will adopt a critical attitude to everything that happens around it and will lift its voice as soon as violence is done to the truth of God's Word. But it will respect the rights of secular government as a special institution of God, with a duty and a calling of its own under the general dispensation of Providence (C. Smeenk : *Christelijke Sociale Beginselen*, pp. 204 and 217). The Church is not competent and is not called to give an answer to all questions of a practical political or social nature. And yet it must ever shed thereon the light given us by God through the special revelation in Holy Scripture (Smeenk, op. cit., page 222). And it is because the terms " racial policy " and " racial question " have in South Africa acquired a strong political connotation, that we in this paper rather speak of the missionary policy of the Church and its underlying principles.

It has been stated above that we accept Holy Scripture as the infallible Word of God. By this is meant Holy Scripture in all its parts, the canonical books of both the Old and the New Testament. It means that we reject the view that the New Testament has come to replace the Old Testament, that the Old Testament has lost its authority and its validity and that we can now attach our own interpretation to the pronouncements of the New Testament.

For us the whole Bible is God's Word, and the profession of the truth therein contained has found its expression in the articles of faith of the Church, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordrecht. He who desires to judge of our standpoint should make sure of well understanding this doctrinal foundation of our Churches. Our interpretation of the pronouncements of God's Word is made on a doctrinal basis, but always in such a manner that the creed is tested by Scripture and not the other way about.

When an account is given of the principles that must be taken as valid for the Church of Christ as regards peoples and nations, then the first reference is usually to the Fatherhood of God. God is the Father of all mankind and all men are of equal value in his sight, it is alleged. Or, worse still, God is the Father of all mankind and all men are therefore brothers.

The Christian mind cannot but feel sympathy with these anxious attempts to prove the unity of mankind. Undoubtedly this is a proof that we human beings are conscious of the disruption that we suffer as a result of sin. And now a remedy is sought. The help of science, in particular that of biology and psychology, is called in. Profound differences of body and mind are denied, among other things with the help of the Bible, which says that God made all the nations of mankind from one blood (Acts 17, 26). God is therefore the Father of all men, all men are his children, and all men are brothers.

Yet, however touching this secret desire for the unity of mankind may be, we must reject this view as unscriptural. The Bible definitely does not consider man *per se* as a child of God or give him the power, as man, to call God his father. (G. C. van Niftrik, *Kleine Dogmatiek*, page 55) " Man, regarded as and by himself, is not a child of God, but a creature of God : ' factus ' (made) and not ' genitus ' (born) " (Karl Barth, *Hauptsumme der Heiligen Lehre*, page 66). Modern humanism, which desires to make the Fatherhood of God and the childhood of man of universal application, here steals a weapon out of the arsenal of the Christian Church, just as rationalism once gathered up the Christian values of liberty, equality and fraternity, applying them to its own purposes by giving them its own unscriptural interpretation.

No, man is not by nature a child of God ; he is a child of wrath (Ephes. 2, 3). God is the eternal Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, but man becomes a child of God only when *called* and *received* thereunto (John 1, 12-14, Rom. 7, 15). Man must receive *power* to become a child of God ; to that end he must be reborn through the power of the Holy Ghost, otherwise he is no child, (Rom. 8, 16 and 17, John 2, 3 and 5). So far, indeed, are all men from being children of God that Christ himself referred to

some, saying: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 7, 44).

God, however, desires that that which He Himself is, shall not be for Himself only. He desires to be that also for man. Therefore he comes to us in Christ Jesus His Son and according to his good pleasure, and calls upon man to become a child of God (Hos. 11, 1). He desires to bear us anew to be children of God and to make us participate in the divine nature (I Peter 1, 23). This does not happen through any natural relation of man to God, but purely out of grace.

And with that we have the whole Gospel message and the calling to carry it forth into the world. I have several times used the word *calling*. It is necessary that we should give mind to its meaning.

The "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches in South Africa did not first sit down to put in writing their views on race relations or to work out a mission policy, before beginning missionary work. Bearing in mind the Saviour's missionary command (Matth. 28, 19), they accepted missionary work at the very first opportunity in the Synod of 1824 as a God-given duty and calling and appealed to all members "most especially to lend aid to the spread of the Christian religion, particularly among the heathen in their own families." After more than a century we look back, and what do we see? The consciousness of a calling from God has become powerful and has taken hold of the Church. For many years it was the habit in many Christian households to call together the servants of whatever race or colour to family prayers; white children of the family were made responsible for teaching non-white servants. They were to teach them to read and write and to instruct them in Christian doctrine. On Sundays on the farm the farmer himself led at prayers at which all were expected to be present. The appeal of the Synod was crowned with great success.

This consciousness of a calling to be ambassadors of the Cross was not equally intensely alive in all places, but it did engender in the Afrikaner the realization that, if he were to abide in the calling wherein he was called, he must avoid miscegenation. Perhaps he understood too literally texts like II Cor. 6, 17: "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord," but then he may be pardoned. He saw what was happening in South Africa. According to the latest census figures, there are 1,171,000 Coloureds in the Union of South Africa and among a great number of these missionary work is done. They were born of a father or a mother who was a Christian, but the law of gravitation operated; they were drawn downwards; the light that shone once, was extinguished. Hence the repeated declarations by responsible persons and even by some of our Churches that no equality of black and white would be permitted. The easiest way to

extinguish the light of the Cross in South Africa would be a policy of total fusion of the races. Therefore, in order to remain faithful to his divine calling and to continue proclaiming the Gospel of God's love in Christ, the Afrikaner had to retain his identity. This obligation rested on him. He had to love himself, that which he had become through the grace of God, in order to be able to love his neighbour. He had to separate himself in order to be a blessing to the millions of non-whites. Thence he derived his apartheid idea.

The idea of a calling, however, explains yet more. In I Cor. 7, 17 to 24, St. Paul does not defend slavery, but he commends the calling of God as the highest aim for a Christian, whether slave or freeman, circumcised or uncircumcised. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." And again, "Brethren, let every man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God." There are masters and there are slaves, there are authorities and subjects, peoples and nations. The calling of God goes out to many, but that does not nullify the natural differences of rank or status. These remain. Rather than attempt to abolish them, they should be made use of. The essential requirement is to keep the commandments of God.

This consciousness of a calling was responsible for the origin of the idea of trusteeship, by which the Church wished to indicate that it would regard it as a privilege to be responsible for the christianizing of the heathen and to help him in his social, educational and economic development in order to bring him to full independence. (See *Mission Policy*, "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches—Annexure to this Paper).

The equalitarian idea that has taken root in the post-war world, has cast serious suspicion on the good intentions of the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches, especially in the minds of the non-whites in our own country. This idea must therefore receive our attention. Can we learn something from it? Is there any truth in it?

Our thanks are due to the late Dr. J. D. du Toit (Totius), more than to anyone else, for having enabled us to evaluate this idea. As early as 1944 he pointed out that we know God the Creator in Scripture as Hammabdil, as the Maker of Separations (See "Inspan," volume 4, No. 3, page 7). To create a cosmos, God separated things: light from darkness, waters above the firmament from waters under the firmament, dry land from the sea. All living creatures, too, he created, *according to their kind*. Man, also, appears from the hand of his Maker diverse as man and woman. No uniformity without differences, therefore, but a multiplicity containing rich diversity—such is the way of creation.

Man has been charged by God to be fruitful and multiply and *replenish the earth* (Gen. 1, 28). This charge was repeated after the Flood, when God said to Noah: "Be fruitful and multiply and *replenish the earth*" (Gen. 9,

1). In order to replenish the earth, men had to move asunder. That means that they had to scatter in separate groups or tribes. It was because of this that St. Paul could say that God made out of one blood *all the nations* of men (Acts 17, 26). From the very beginning it was the intention of the Lord that mankind should live in separate nations and peoples. In his sinful self-conceit man wished to frustrate this intention, as much as to say: "Let us not part, let us remain together. And let us build a tower to reach unto heaven." And then God came as the Maker of separations and said: "Behold the people is one, and they have all one language. . . . Go to, let us go down and confound their language. . . . So the Lord scattered them abroad," (Gen. 11, 6. 7. 8).

Mankind desired a unity that was sinful in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord intervened and caused an increase in peoples which, according to Scripture, must continue until the completion of all things, and possibly even after. St. John says: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues. . . . and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it" (i.e. the new Jerusalem), (Rev. 7, 8 and 21, 24). The rise and continuance of separate peoples and nations is, according to Scripture, in accordance with the will of God. Attempts at unification, the equalitarian idea, is a revival of the Babylonish spirit that had already said, right at the beginning of man's history: "Let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (Gen. 11, 4). It is fruitless to speculate on the question whether the organic development of mankind would have led to the same result had sin not come. We have to deal with the factual position, such as we experience in this sinful world. There can be no doubt that God willed the separate existence of nations, and that even in the Church of Christ, as it exists here in its instituted form, the Gospel did not abolish the differences in endowment, nature, culture, etc. between the different racial groups. Any attempt to ignore this, will be an attempt to build another Tower of Babel. And it is significant for the Christian Church that the products of such attempts in the political field are called "beasts" in the Revelation of St. John (Rev. 17, 13. Also see Dan. 7).

It is therefore not only for practical reasons, as is sometimes stated, that the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches in their mission policy aim at the establishment of separate non-white churches which must finally become completely independent. The mission policy of these Churches rests on profound Scriptural ground. And apart from that, any other policy is too simple not to appear suspect. The Christian Churches must be careful not to deprive the whole of Africa's Nativedom of the privilege to make its own contribution to the development of the

Christian truths (*J. du Plessis*: "*Wie sal Gaan?*", page 38). The Native peoples were able to teach us much of fatherhood, brotherhood and respect for authority. These qualities they have already to a great extent lost as a result of the integration policy pursued also by some Churches and the consequent disintegration of their tribal life. In order to avoid this danger, the establishment of separate Churches is the only way out.

But then what of the unity which we as Christians profess? Is not the Church the body of Christ? And must not all the members be knit together in this one body?

These questions are asked with compelling seriousness, and then reference is made to the well-known pronouncements of St. Paul in Gal. 3, 26 and Col. 3, 11: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus There is no longer Greek nor Jew . . . bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." Reference is also often made to the High-Priestly prayer of the Lord Jesus in John 17, 23 "that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me. . . ."

The pronouncement of St. Paul in 1 Cor. 12, 14: "For the body is not one member, but many," should already put everyone on his guard that care should be exercised with the application of these texts. The unity of the body which he there advocates is a unity of the spirit. "Whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (vs. 13). In Col. 3, 10, St. Paul also includes circumcised and uncircumcised. He himself, however, took and circumcised Timothy so that he could accompany him to Jerusalem. In Christ there are no longer circumcised and uncircumcised, but he himself still applies circumcision! (Acts 16, 13). Therefore the Apostle does not plead for the ending of these natural diversities, but for the unity of the spirit in Christ.

It must strike every unprejudiced interpreter of Scripture that in Gal. 3 St. Paul three times uses the expression "in Christ." In St. John 27, 21, 22, the Lord Jesus six times uses the expressions "in Me," "in thee." The unity that is advocated there is to be found only *in Christ*, *in God*. Outside Christ—this can be said without fear of any contradiction—there is no unity, in any case no unity in the sense in which the New Testament understands it. Notwithstanding all pleas to the contrary and in spite of Gal. 3 and other Scriptural passages to the same effect, there still exist Jews and Greeks and men and women and circumcised and uncircumcised, even within one and the same communion. These earthly distinctions have remained in existence within the Church of Christ, and we can only conclude that the intention of the Apostle is that whoever are in Christ, are spiritually one, in spite of all other national, language, sex or other differences.

We therefore note two possibilities. There is first the

possibility that the truths of Christian religion can be used to build an artificial, unnatural, sinful unity out of all sorts of heterogeneous elements. This would be equivalent to the building of a Tower of Babel and the characteristic of such unity may be best described by the word in Rev. 17, 13: "These have one mind..." This way holds the dire possibility that man, and even the Church, however well-meaningly, will convert the natural order, the Cosmos willed and brought into being by God in such rich diversity, into a chaos, an interfusion of species and types where no order can any longer exist.

The other possibility is to respect God's handiwork, to pay heed to all natural distinctions and to strive to come to the oneness of the spirit of Christ, being all informed by the same Spirit. The characteristic of this oneness is described in the prayer of the Lord Jesus "That all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee" (John 17, 21).

This latter, and much more difficult goal, is aimed at by the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches. It is therefore necessary to say more about our conception of unity in Christ.

Every Christian must needs deplore the multiplicity and pluriformity of Churches and admit that this is not in accordance with the revealed will of God. But, on the other hand, "unity as a human ideal has just as little to do with the Christian religion as any other human ideal" (*Van Niftrik*, Op. cit., page 185). Unity in Christ does not necessarily come about within one denomination; it is not a question of uniformity in the institutional sense. It is a question of oneness of faith. Oneness in Christ is not to be conceived apart from oneness with the body of Christ. And that is a matter of faith much more than of external demonstration. We also believe in a holy Church. But no one will want to undertake to demonstrate the sanctity of the Church: church history shows too much of what is sinful and unholy. But, "if one believes in the Holy Ghost, as it lives and works in this Church, then one is not, even in the worst case, altogether separated from other communions. Not those are the truly ecumenical Christians who blur the differences or facily glide over them, but on the contrary those who, *each for himself in his Church*, are quite concretely a Church," (*Karl Barth*, op. cit., page 218, my italics).

Neither is the Church the Kingdom of Heaven. At best, the Church is the *vehiculum civitatis Dei*—the bearer of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of God is present, here and now, within the Church, for, says Jesus, "the Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17, 21), but the Church is not the Kingdom. When the Kingdom shall come in visible form, then there will no longer be a Church (Rev. 21, 22). And that will not come about through gradual development, but the Kingdom of God

will come through a tremendous catastrophe. Then it will be "the society of the children of God in the communion of the perfect just" (*A. Kuyper*, "Van het Koninkrijk der Hemelen," page 300).

It is to be understood that it applies especially to Christendom that "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8, 19), but this desire should not tempt us to "convert the spiritual unity into an outward form and to misjudge the spiritual and eschatological character of the Kingdom of God" (Dr. E. P. Groenewald, in a paper before the Men's Missionary League Congress, October 2, 1953). The Church as the body of Christ exists here within all the limitations of space and time; it is subject to these. Only when the Kingdom of God comes in perfection will these limitations pass away and will a great multitude that no one can count, appear before the throne of the Lamb from all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues. In the meantime we walk by faith, not by sight (II Cor. 5, 7). The fact is that unity in Christ is a community of soul transcending anything that man can plan or think. It belongs to those things that "eye hath not seen, not ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 3, 9); that can be accepted only in faith.

The difficulty experienced by the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches to present their missionary policy acceptably to those of a different mind, is due especially to the fact that the contrariety between the Kingdom of God and the world is not always kept in focus. The fact is that we have so many centuries of development behind us, centuries during which Christianity and civilization interacted, that we speak now of a *Christian civilization*. Without asking whether the two terms of such a concept are compatible, I wish to point out that what it has entailed is that civilization has often claimed promises for itself that apply only to the Kingdom of Heaven; and conversely, that relations applicable only to the world are applied to the Kingdom of Heaven. For the sake of brevity, I shall content myself with one example only.

It is alleged that all men are equal, that all must enjoy equal rights and that all forms of discrimination are un-Christian. On the other hand, the fact confronts us that all men are in fact not equal, that all cannot with equal profit make use of the same privileges, that discrimination in the sense of differentiation or distinction is necessary and even indispensable for an ordered society.

I think that it would have been better to talk of equality, or equal dignity and "allogeneity" ("andersoortigheid.") All men are equal in the sense that all are created in the image of God. God has placed all men in the same relationship to Himself, but He created each one with his own personality, his own task and calling. All men are equal

as bearers of God's image ; all have the same *dignitas*. But they are not equal in their personality, nor, therefore, in their calling in the world (Brunner, op. cit. page 119).

Basic to the Christian missions and all social uplift work issuing therefrom, is the idea of the equal value of all men. When a century ago great numbers of the Non-European population were exterminated by the barbaric atrocities of Chaka and Dingaan, when hundreds of Europeans perished in the same manner, there was no thought of a systematic liquidation of the black races, for the simple reason that the barbarian, too, was seen as a creature of God, to be brought to the gospel of salvation. For them, too, Christ died because, however faintly, in their souls little sparks of God's image yet glowed.

Nevertheless the Afrikaans Churches never admitted that all people and all peoples are equal in all respects. Actually, when speaking of race differences, we here step on to another plane. We are dealing with the natural, in contrast to the spiritual. I would not aver that the natural is of lesser importance. St. Paul said : "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual" (I Cor. 15, 46). To say that one person or people is different from another is not to impugn the equal dignity of one or of both. "Functional subordination has nothing to do with equal dignity," says Brunner (Op. cit. page 120). The difficulty however, arises when that equal dignity of all men is rationalistically transferred to the plane of the natural. Then every form of authority is under attack and it is contended that any form of subordination is contrary to man's dignity and freedom as a creature of God. We should bear in mind that confusion of ideas of this type usually leads to absolute totalitarianism or absolute dictatorship. Under both systems there is an end of all dignity and freedom of the individual.

In the natural sphere, therefore, differences between people and peoples do exist. It is this fact that the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches take into account when they set themselves in their mission policy the objective of helping the Non-European to develop "idiotogeneously" ("eiesoortig,") according to their own nature and capacities. He who concludes from this that the Afrikaans Churches make themselves guilty of oppression or even slavery, utters a calumny. It must indeed be a peculiar mentality in a Church to exert its utmost powers, both in money and manpower, in order to follow such un-Christian principles.

It is often said of the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Church that it is great and powerful, making its influence felt in all aspects of life in South Africa. In the light of our history it would have been indeed strange if no influence and power had emanated from the Church to affect national life. But I wish to state here that the Church does not

feel great and powerful and influential. There is in the Church much fear and trembling. The Church has again and again had the experience that, where it proceeded in its own strength, the limitation laid upon it has been absolute : "Without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15, 5). Or rather, the Church found that its weakness, its profound dependence, brought it again and again to the Source of all power, so that it could say : "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me ;" (Philipp. 4, 13).

To have made this admission was necessary. The Church finds itself in a *crisis*, standing amid the breaking of the waves. It seeks an anchor. Currents and tendencies of the post-war world have flung it over great depths. It is being judged and condemned. It would fain, once again, consider what is its real task and calling ; it was constrained to seek firm ground under its feet.

Some there were who would have it that the Church should do more social work. More schools and institutions for all kinds of uplift work ! Greater activity in the social field as a proof of its goodwill ! This was and is the cry. Now admittedly the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches have indeed made much use of missionary aids to be found in education, in medical, agricultural and other activities—but only as *aids*. The Church is not a social institution. It is *kyriake oikia*, it is *ekklesia*. It belongs to the Lord. It dare not water down the message it bears to a "social gospel ;" it dare not let itself be tempted to participate in the forcing of national problems after the manner of communism and national socialism. Yes, it must be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, but "the application of 'Christian principles,' e.g. Christian community principles, in the social life of this world is indeed a very dangerous and perilous undertaking" (Van Niftrik, Op. cit., page 194). The Church must adhere to the mandate received from its Lord the King. And that mandate does not read : "Go ye forth and make learned men," or : "Go ye forth and make technicians," but : "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," and : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16, 15). There is no prohibition of all these social activities, but the Church is concerned with considerably greater things. It must preach the gospel of forgiveness, must be the herald of Jesus Christ. The missionary is no propagandist, but an evangelist ; he is "*Verbi Divini Minister*" (II Tim 4, 5). He must not be aught else.

It is thus that we have endeavoured to understand our task and calling. We do not see the Christian mission to the heathen of our country as something accidental, as a little work of supererogation. We see it as the real task and calling of the Church, and of Christendom. It cannot be removed therefrom without tearing the heart out of the body (J. du Plessis, op. cit., page 7).

I have adduced this argument to explain why the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde" Churches make it a cardinal point in their mission policy to lead the Church formed out of the heathen to complete independence. Our object is not to acquire "adherents" for ourselves from among the Bantu, not even to "influence" a lesser or greater number; nay, our object is the establishment of congregations, the building of a Church according to the example of the Apostles in the New Testament.

For this aim we exert all our powers. We have done much, but, if we have to make confession, then it is that we have not done enough. The harvest is great and the workers are few and we know that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and that the violent take it by force," (Matth. 11, 12). We have, however, the assurance of the King of the Church that He Himself is building His Church (Matth. 16, 18) and we know that the number of them that pray: "Thy Kingdom come" is ever increasing in South Africa and that presently a great multitude of white and non-white will unite with the whole of Christendom in that last entreaty of the Church Militant of the Lord on earth: Amen, yes come, Lord Jesus.

SUMMARY

1. It was the practice of missionary work that demanded attention first. The fundamental principles of the policy were formulated only later.
2. We may expect help from all Christian Churches in the formulation of our principles. In the application we stand alone.
3. Every principle derived from the Gospel is fundamental for the Church.
4. The Church's task is limited. It is expecting too much to ask it to prescribe a racial policy for the country.
5. We accept the Bible as the word of God and our interpretation of Scripture is on a doctrinal basis.
6. We hold that God is the eternal Father of Christ His Son.
7. We deny that man as such is a child of God.
8. The calling of God is a cardinal principle with us :
 - (a) Calling and preservation of our identity.
 - (b) Calling and natural differences between people and peoples.
9. The coming into being of separate nations was the work of God.
10. The apartheid policy of the Churches is founded not only on practical grounds, but also on grounds of principle.
11. The modern Tower of Babel : the idea of equalization
 - (a) Unity as a human ideal.
 - (b) Unity in Christ.
12. The Church and the Kingdom of God.
13. Christianity and civilization.
14. Equality of all men—all have the same *dignitas*, being all created in the image of God.
15. The allogeneity ("andersoortigheid") that exists—each has his own nature, capacities and calling.
16. The Church and the Missions. Preaching the Gospel is its real task and not social work of whatever nature.

Kalahari Possibilities.

"Fifty million acres of idle grassland," "One of the world's last empty spaces"—the phrases are taken from the report of the commission appointed in 1952 by the British Government to investigate the possibilities in the immense grasslands of the Western Kalahari. The commission represented experience in the Sudan, Kenya, America, and South Africa, and included also two experienced chiefs of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, Tshekedi and Bathoen II. These men went together through a great part of the area and found it to be remarkably healthy for cattle and human beings alike. Conditions appeared to differ very little from those prevailing in earlier days in Arizona, Texas, or Queensland. They also found serious difficulties, mainly two—the lack of water and the remoteness of the region. But their considered conclusions are favourable, even though they saw the territory under severe drought conditions, and realised very clearly that little food can be grown there. They are sure that it would be very wrong to do nothing, even though they cannot guarantee certain success, and they recommend that a forty thousand acre pilot farm should be started near Ghansi without delay, by a government-financed managing company. A definite breeding policy should be followed here with the emphasis on indigenous African stock, and if in five years' time results are sufficiently encouraging, then blocks of land should be opened up for private ranching and allotted to European and African applicants alike. "We are fully aware" says the report, "of the difficulty of racial issues, which, however, in Bechuanaland have never been unfriendly. We think it important that racial discrimination should be avoided and that every man should be treated according to his character and ability." On this the comment of the independent London weekly, the *Economist* is "In a crucial part of Africa, a body of independent experts believe British may be given a chance to put the ideal of partnership to a working test."

As regards the crucial requisite—water—while no surface water could be found save for shallow pools which may persist for a short time after rain, evidence was found of very considerable untapped underground supplies, and the general conclusion is that even if the carrying capacity of the area should prove to be no higher than one beast to fifty acres, there is the possibility of adding one million much needed to the world's cattle population, or upwards of fifty thousand tons of beef to its larders.

In Memoriam—Professor G. F. Dingemans

WE have received with deep regret news of the death in England, at the home of his son, of Professor G. F. Dingemans, a member of Fort Hare University Council since 1919 and its chairman from 1933 to 1943.

By birth a Hollander, Professor Dingemans took an honours degree in Classics at Edinburgh University, and after holding teaching appointments in Cape Town and Grahamstown for brief periods, became in 1904 one of the foundation professors of Rhodes University College. To it he remained faithful during the whole of his active career, and on his retiral the University of South Africa, of which Rhodes at that time was a constituent College, recognised his exceptional gifts as a linguist, a teacher of Dutch Language and Literature, and an architect of university education in South Africa, by conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Literature.

Profound scholar as he was in several languages, Professor Dingemans, beyond occasional lectures, has not left any memorials of himself in writing. He was essentially a teacher who by his passionate love for the best in the literature of many nations inspired generation after generation of students with like-minded enthusiasm. Not only by his scholarship but by the integrity of his character and the practice of his essentially simple Christian faith, which governed his whole outlook and activity, he has left his imprint upon his students, and they repaid him by a depth of affectionate regard which in his later years approached veneration. It was a great grief to them and to many others of his friends that his years of retirement were clouded by illness which enforced his withdrawal from many activities upon which his interest had formerly been fixed.

It is however with his missionary outlook and his connection with Fort Hare that this magazine is mainly concerned. Dr. Dingemans left no one in doubt that for him religion was paramount in life. He was an early and strong supporter of the Student Christian Movement. He was profoundly moved by the Zionist colonization of Palestine which, to his reading, was a fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. He was interested in the Sudan United and other missions and in all efforts to Christianize the non-European peoples of South Africa. From such depth of religious feeling sprang his interest in the higher education of the Bantu and his acceptance of the appointment as one of the two representatives of the University of South Africa, and latterly of the Union Government, on the Council of Fort Hare. It was a delight to him that the College for the Bantu rested on a century of missionary labour for their evangelization, and he was insistent that the Christian character of the College should be effectively maintained. As became a Professor of literature, he was deeply interested in the building up of the College Library, and in the

initiation of a museum of African cultures as an adjunct to the teaching of Anthropology. On one occasion he personally approached the various European Powers with colonial possessions in Africa with a view to obtaining an exchange of official publications which might be useful to students studying the various systems of government or the differential progress of African tribes. On the occasions when he was invited to lecture to the Fort Hare English Association both students and staff of the College delighted in the revelation of wide culture and enthusiastic exposition afforded by such opportunities—sometimes, indeed, not strictly relevant to the main aims of an English Association, but assuredly always enlargement of one's conception of one or other of the main elements of Western civilization. Fort Hare counted itself privileged that its proximity to Rhodes University allowed it to share in the treasures of reading, reflection and experience which the Professor dispensed with such lavishness and eloquence. Nor will anyone who heard it readily forget the oration which Professor Dingemans delivered at the first graduation ceremony of Fort Hare. To such as he, men of high distinction in their various fields, African students owe a great debt, which to their honour they are not backward in acknowledging.

No one can gauge how far the example of intellectual and moral integrity and of passionate attachment to and exposition of the highest things, which the life and teaching of Professor Dingemans afforded, has pervaded Africa owing to his contacts with African students, which from the nature of the case, could only be occasional. His life was an embodiment of the prayer: *Nkosi sikelele i-Afrika.*

A.K.

ON THE PASSING OF PROFESSOR DINGEMANS

It was through misty seas you went away,
Upon the binnacle a dimming light.
You went away as fading from our sight
A beacon dies at the dawning of a day.
Your splendour hid itself, a heavenly ray
Of wisdom that had beckoned eager youth
To nobler vision and to deeper truth
For such as fell before the crushing sway
Of bitter hatred. Ah! when shall we hear
Such eloquence, the searing tongue of flame,
The cleansing fire that separates the gold,
Such treasured knowledge like a shining mere
Reflecting earth and sky? That sounding name
Shall still be on our hearts when time grows old.

David J. Darlow.

“Settler’s Heritage”

A SOUTH AFRICAN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

DR. Francis Carey Slater has long been recognised as one of South Africa’s foremost literary men : some would say its greatest poet on South African themes. His “Dark Folk,” “The Karroo,” “Drought,” “The Trek” and his lyrics have given him a permanent place in South African literature. As a novelist and anthologist he has also enriched his native land.

When his “Selected Poems” (selected chiefly by Edmund Blunden) was published by the Oxford Press in 1947, its biographical introduction by R. C. K. Ensor gave some indication of the richly individual life that lay behind the poet’s work. The autobiographical volume now under review* gives the fuller picture.

And a delightful picture it is. Dr. Slater is a descendant of the 1820 Settlers—a body of men and women to whom scant justice has been done in South Africa’s history books or monuments. The qualities that marked the Settlers—their courage, their integrity, their devotion to work and duty, their closeness to nature—are all seen in this descendant, along with much more.

Born near Alice in the eastern Cape Colony in 1876, Francis Slater began work on his father’s farm at the age of five ; was early inured to the saddle, riding once, at the age of nine, a distance of 85 miles between nightfall and 11 a.m. ; he learned to read between the ages of six and seven, and at eight became familiar with the poems of Sir Walter Scott and began himself to write verse. When ten he had read “Paradise Lost.” By the age of twelve he had read all Scott’s novels, and was familiar with the work of the greatest British poets. His only formal schooling was at Lovedale between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. At the latter age he accepted a clerical post in Alice but continued to devour the books in the Lovedale Library. About the same time he fell under the influence of Lovedale’s celebrated Principal, Dr. James Stewart, who encouraged him in his poetic efforts. At the age of twenty-three he passed into the service of the Standard Bank. For the next thirty-one years he was in the Bank’s service in a dozen different places in South Africa, so that he came to know the country’s varied life. His knowledge was all the surer because he was familiar with Xhosa and Dutch, and so could enter into the thoughts of all sections of the South African people.

Now in a beautifully written book he gives us the story of his days. We see him play many parts, as companion of the Bantu, polo player, cricketer, anthologist, poet. Through all, from earliest years, we find in him a wonder-

ful sensitiveness to natural scenery, a fellow-feeling with all human and animal nature, and a passionate love of the best literature. In literature Dr. Slater has found his solace and his most appealing form of labour. Nothing was more fittingly done than when the University of South Africa made this man of business a Doctor of Literature.

The book is one of the most charitable in its judgments that we have ever read. Such javelins as he throws are almost all directed at the modern poets who confuse obscurity with genius, and at those misguided critics who try to “debunk” writers like Scott and Tennyson. Some of the most interesting pages of the volume are those which carry Dr. Slater’s literary judgments on famous authors and their work.

The book has many an attractive picture of South African life, especially as it was lived in eastern Cape Colony fifty or sixty years ago, and in other parts in more modern times. It is enlivened with many a humorous sally, in which we find the author frequently laughing at himself. Many a famous man steps into its pages, but yet we are never far from the simple things of life and the world of nature. The pages are redolent of deep loyalty to the best of South Africa’s past and to those who have enriched the author’s own days, especially in the things of the mind and spirit.

Some of the judgments on South Africa’s political problems may not carry universal assent. In his poem “Drought” Dr. Slater speaks plainly of the hate which is the drought of the spirit. He deplores the influence of the Afrikaner extremists. But he states plainly that he dislikes English-speaking jingoes almost as much. “A number of my writings in verse—especially my longest poem *The Trek*—afford unquestionable evidence of my sincere admiration of great South Africans of Dutch descent and their heroic deeds. But whilst I honour the Voortrekker leaders of long ago, who were giants in courage, mind and spirit, I find it most deplorable that their mantle of leadership should have fallen upon the shoulders of those who, in comparison with them, are spiritual dwarfs !”

A valuable addition to the life story is a series of letters from General Smuts (sixteen in all from him), Sir Richard Livingstone, George Saintsbury, James Stewart, Roy Campbell, John Buchan and others.

This book is treasure added to South African literature.
R.H.W.S.

“Let every land have joy of its poet ; for the poet is the land itself, all its greatness and its sweetness, all that incommunicable heritage for which men live and die.”

—George Gissing in “*Shakespeare’s Island*.”

* *Settler’s Heritage*, by Francis Carey Slater, D. Litt., (Lovedale Press : 12/6d.)

South African Institute of Race Relations

ADDRESS : "IN MEMORIAM : J. D. RHEINALLT JONES"

COUNCIL MEETING, PORT ELIZABETH, JANUARY, 1954

By Dr. E. H. Brookes.

AT the opening of this Council meeting we want to record our sorrow at the loss of our President and former Director, Mr. J. D. Rheinallt Jones; to pay homage, as is right and proper, to his life-time of work for us; and to express the sincere respect and affection which we feel for him.

Those of us who belong to the older generation of the Institute will not need any reminding of the fact that in its earliest stages the Institute *was* Rheinallt Jones and Rheinallt Jones was the Institute. When a formal organisation was created in 1929, it was, as it were, to give "a local habitation and a name" to work which had been going on for some years. We grew out of that long before R.J.'s death. It was good that we did. Our work was too many-sided, and our continually increasing corps of workers too mature, for us to be identified with any one man, however good. The Institute in other words has grown up, and R.J. would not have had it otherwise. But he is in every sense and in the fullest degree its founder, and it is work of piety and duty to remember that fact today.

In the pamphlet, "R.J." which I had the honour and pleasure of editing, we recorded those early days and we tried to enumerate with ever-increasing wonder the enormous number of activities which filled R.J.'s life from 1919 when he first came to Johannesburg, to that solemn day, almost a year ago, when the tireless worker ceased to work. I do not propose today to repeat that story. It is here in print for all of you to read. It is rightly recorded in history, as it is a very real part of the social history of our country. Today, however, I want rather to speak simply of the man as I knew him.

I believe that fundamentally R.J. was a social worker rather than a politician, an economist or a philosopher; and that, while he rarely if ever prepared a poor memorandum or an inaccurate exposition of a subject, his heart was really at its best in work with and for people, especially young people. Some of the happiest memories that we have of him are connected with the African Boy Scouts—the "Pathfinders" as he knew them for most of his life—and his early work with Juvenile Affairs Boards showed that it was not only the African youth in whom he was interested.

I think that he tried to do too much, and was too often in a hurry as a result. He certainly often tried to say more than the "unforgiving minute" (or the unforgiving forty minutes) would hold: hence the breakneck and bewildering speed of some of his public utterances. It was such a

joy to get him when he was really relaxed, and had time to enjoy life and indulge his very genuine and kindly sense of fun. That opportunity I had on many Saturday afternoons during the Parliamentary Sessions of 1938 to 1942, when we took our frequently repeated walk up Kloof Nek to the Round House, down through the Glen to Camps Bay and back to the Sea Point Terminus. We enjoyed talking about cabbages and kings—or in view of the habits of the Round House, should I say cream scones and Presidents? To stay in his old home at Florida was another happy experience, which some of you shared with me—the gargantuan breakfasts, the academic tennis matches where the Professor of History dealt out stern justice to the Professors of Philosophy and Mathematics, the talks in the evenings, the quiet chats in his peaceful garden.

It is a pity that the two of us who are speaking to this subject today never worked as members of R.J.'s office staff. That role was not always easy, especially when R.J. returned from a tour like a giant refreshed and decided to make up for lost time. Yet I think that those who were close to him in the Office often experienced his real caring for their personal difficulties, his shy and transient but very vivid emotion, his sense of humour; and in this connection I think I may be permitted to quote what is written in the pamphlet "R.J." :—

"Anyone not knowing Rheinallt Jones personally and judging him from the luminous, clear and lucid memoranda which he produced, would form a picture of the man not at all in accord with the facts. 'R.J.' had all the Welsh fire, and his orderly mind did not mirror itself in an orderly programme. The Institute office in his day, as described by one who knew it intimately, consisted of 'a series of blitzes.' Rheinallt Jones would return from one of his numerous tours and for the next three days the staff would be running round in circles, coping with the accumulation of correspondence which he dealt with in manly fashion, not altogether unlike the way in which Boswell found Dr. Johnson in his library, buffering his books amid clouds of dust. Efforts were made in vain to get him to use a dictaphone regularly. His experiences of it were unhappy. On one historic occasion he dictated into it for three hours but forgot to ensure that it was recording. Another time he was called out in the middle of using it and forgot to switch it off. When he returned the cylinder was almost melted. On a third occasion his secretary asked him if he would like to listen to his own voice as she heard it on the dicta-

phone record. 'It's just like Donald Duck,' she said. Mischievously she timed the machine to 'fast' and it was like Donald Duck's, a point which could be mentioned discreetly on future occasions when he dictated too indistinctly.

"His staff loved him," writes his successor, Mr. Quintin Whyte. "He might be irascible, driving, difficult, but there was hardly a member of his staff who did not respect him and who did not love him. This is no exaggeration. When R.J. smiled, when he relaxed, when he asked about some trouble, when he joked, he was so human and approachable and happy. The staff might become exasperated but the exasperation did not endure for long. The staff regarded him as an inspiration in selfless and devoted work."

This memoir is a picture of a man, not a panegyric of a saint, and it must be recorded that Rheinallt Jones had his faults. He often drove his staff, sometimes pitilessly, but never as hard as he drove himself. He was too often in a hurry, yet never in too much of a hurry to revise and re-revise an important memorandum. Mr. Whyte recollects one occasion on which he produced eight drafts. The Institute and his other activities so filled his life that he left himself insufficient time to live. Unlike W.H. Davies he rarely had time to "stand and stare." In this he impoverished himself and others, yet it was his great desire to give himself which led him to do so. But the deeper human emotions in him, the hunger for the spiritual, the need for friendship, burst out; all his overwork never killed them. He was easily hurt, but his capacity for forgiveness was great. In fact, he was a very human man whom his friends loved, as well as a clear thinker, a devoted servant of duty, and an incredibly hard worker with an energy which had to be experienced to be believed.

I do not think that R.J. can be fully understood without taking account of his Welsh ancestry, and of the country Manse in which he grew up, frugal, cultured, full of ideals and enthusiasms, liberal in every bit of its being. He became a true son and servant of South Africa, but I do not think that he ever forgot the rock of the Cambrian mountains whence he was hewn, and he would have been the poorer man if he had.

While he knew South Africa so well and served it so strenuously, he never limited his interests to the boundaries of the Union, but went out, and increasingly so in later years, to the wider Africa, and in this respect set us all a good example; for even if we cannot all travel as he did it is good for us all to remember that human life does not cease to exist when one reaches the Limpopo River.

R.J. has left the Institute a heritage, which is to be valued and defended. He has given us the sound and good tradition of accuracy in facts and integrity in their presentation. He has taught us to mix our political passions with hard

work and unbiassed thought, and especially and most valuably with personal contacts and caring for the people behind the statistics. I hope that the Institute will always work in this spirit.

I do not wish to prolong this address. To give a full account of R.J.'s activities would take hours. But within a very few minutes it is possible for us who were his friends and who loved him to remember together all those good and simple things that were more important than Committees and Memoranda, and that kind heart that we valued even more than the clear head and constantly active mind. At the end, when each of us comes to face his own departure, what will matter to us much more than what we have done or said or written will be that our friends love us, and care for us. That is our feeling about R.J. He was our friend while he walked with us, and he was greatly loved. I ask you to honour him in your hearts in this spirit simply and sincerely.

PRAISE YE THE LORD

Come, all ye children of God's grace,
Lift high your praiseful song;
In every land, in every place
Your joyful notes prolong.
Sing and your anthems raise on high
To God who reigns above,
Whose glory is beyond the sky,
Whose greatest name is Love.
Praise Jesus Who for sinners stood
And bore the cross of shame,
Who has redeemed us by His blood
And called us by His name.
Praise Him as Lord of Righteousness
And King of Glory too;
By Him will God all nations bless,
By Him make all things new.

DAVID A. McDONALD.

National Sunday School Convention.

The Secretary of the S.A. National Sunday School Association writes as follows:

"Will Sunday School Workers please note that a very warm invitation is extended to them to attend the 39th Annual National Sunday School Convention of the South African National Sunday School Association, which will be held in co-operation with the Port Elizabeth and District Sunday School Union at the Wool Exchange, Military Road, Port Elizabeth during Easter from the 16-19 April 1954. For further particulars and Registration Form apply to the General Secretary, South African National Sunday School Association, P.O. Box 17, Port Elizabeth.

New Books

South Africa in a changing World, by Edgar H. Brookes, (Oxford Press, 151 pp. 12/6).

By working up into this volume the lectures which he gave at the University of Natal in the earlier half of 1953 Dr. Brookes has rendered us all a great service. He tells us that his talks were an appeal to young South Africans to see their country's problems in a world perspective. How urgently necessary that is needs no stressing, nor have we anybody better qualified to help us in the matter than he. He has the full, vital mind, the rich variety of knowledge, the practised gift of expression, the intelligent patriotism, and the deep sincerity of purpose which such a task demands. These qualities are all in evidence in these pages. Moreover the topics with which he deals are all real and up-to-date—"The passing of the White Man's Overlordship," "Nationalism and World Unity," and so on. And he handles them frankly and arrestingly as few of our publicists can. When he switches the light on to our ways in South Africa, especially in the chapter entitled "That credulous morality," (a phrase borrowed from Burke), his diagnosis is shrewd and his criticism of our proneness to submit to the tyranny of phrases searching but fair enough. In the closing chapter he examines the possibility of complete catastrophe, in an endeavour to face our ultimate fears. Let us sit at his feet for a moment:—

"To those of us who believe—and we are many—in the Resurrection and abounding life of Christ our Lord, the last word in the sphere of the spirit is victory. Right does triumph deep in the nature of things. But this is at a level which transcends race relations or economic or political systems, and the living hope which it gives us of ultimate victory in the human personality is not a facile optimism as to the victory of any particular 'ism'—even our own favourite 'ism.' It is necessary to say these things, because there is no other answer that goes deep enough to meet human fear as we find it in South Africa and in the greater world today, nor can we offer any certain hope that that fear will not be realised in practice.

"All this will not prevent us from doing our best in the daily life that lies before us in the country which we so passionately love, as a soldier's first duty is not to be cocksure of victory but, quite simply and prosaically, to obey orders and not to run away."

It is much to be desired that this little book should have a much wider circulation than its price is likely to allow it. How much good it might do if it could be produced in a cheap paper-covered edition—and in Afrikaans too.

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A South African Study of the Alcohol Question, by A. Simpson Wells, M.D., F.R.C.S. (Edin.)

In recent years temperance literature has been marked by the scientific approach, fullness of knowledge, and persuasiveness, but we know of no booklet that bears more these features than this 40 page publication by Dr. A. Simpson Wells. For over fifty years Dr. Wells has been a distinguished member of the medical profession with a wealth of experience of South African conditions, and out of his fullness of study and experience, though himself a lifelong abstainer, he declares that grave dangers lie in the use of alcohol.

The booklet deals with many aspects: the medical use of alcohol; alcohol and the law; alcoholism; the economic factor; the tot system, etc. Quotations from authorities are very widely drawn, and the statistics are effectively presented. There is some plain speaking, not least on the cocktail party menace, but through all is the impression of a mind which is fair and restrained, a citizen that loves South Africa and its people, and a writer with a notable lucidity of expression. This is temperance literature at its best.

R.H.W.S.

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Unwilling Journey: A Diary from Russia, by Helmut Gollwitzer (S.C.M. Press, London, 16/-).

The author of this book, a pastor and professor of the Confessional Church in Germany, belonged from 1933 to the extreme Socialist Left in Germany. He was expelled from Berlin under the Hitler regime, and conscripted for the German army, in which he served first as an infantryman and later as a medical orderly. He was taken prisoner by the Russians as the war ended and held by them for nearly five years.

This book is a record of his experiences while in Soviet hands. It is notable for its objective treatment, particularly in its analysis of Marxism. The author, whose sympathies were much with the Left, made a careful study of Communist teaching and of how this was being applied in actual life, so far as he saw it in Russia. He acknowledges what he found to be worthy of commendation, such as how comparatively seldom the Russians resorted to flogging. Yet nothing is clearer than that, according to the moral standards of Christianity, the Russian system is a cruel and despicable one. A main purpose of the author is to show, by cold analysis, how he was led to reject Communism as practised in Russia, while he remained much in sympathy with Socialist teaching and practice. The book is full of pen pictures of conditions in Russia, and these are all the more telling because of the author's avoidance of sensationalism and melodramatic effects.

A main effect of the book on the reader is to awaken interest in and pity for the thousands of prisoners still held in Soviet camps, contrary to all justice and human rights.

R.H.W.S.

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The Meaning of 'Ecumenical,' by W. A. Visser 't Hooft, (S.C.M. Press, 28 pp. 2/-).

This is the "Burge Memorial" lecture for 1952, delivered in the Church House, Westminster in November that year by the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Dr. Visser 't Hooft's contribution to this very interesting series, in succession to men like Bishop Berggrav, Marc Boegner, Professor Tawney, or our own Professor Theodore Haarhoff, took the form of an erudite and interesting discussion of a word which is regarded by so many as unfortunate and of more hindrance than help to the cause it describes. Dr. 't Hooft's view is that this word, though admittedly difficult and hard to popularise, has nevertheless come to stay. "It seems that no other word exists which can express the specific ethos of the movement for unity and co-operation of Churches and Christians which has grown up during the last forty years."

Most of the lecture is historical, dealing with the meanings which have been attached to the word during various periods of history—in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, in the Septuagint, the New Testament, in the early Patristic and the Byzantine eras, in the Orthodox and Western Churches, and in the modern era of co-ordination.

The reasons for the emerging success of the word, in spite of its defects, are various, the major one being that "it could be used to express at one and the same time the truths that the Church of Christ is world-wide, supranational, supra-racial, that it is essentially one and that this oneness contains a variety of gifts. . . . Owing to its introduction into the language of the Christian Church a deeper spiritual connotation was added to the original geographical meaning. One cannot speak of the universality of the Church without referring at least implicitly to its unity."

In conclusion the hope is expressed that we shall never allow the word to be used in an introverted manner. "It must not be isolated from the missionary and evangelistic context in which it belongs. The Christian Oikoumene has the right to call itself by that name only if it remembers that it exists to be the salt of the earth, that is to represent the coming Oikoumene in the midst of the Oikoumene which is the whole inhabited earth."

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Why I believe my Bible, by Arthur B. Arnot, (Privately published, obtainable from the Baptist Manse, Bloemfontein, 48 pp.).

The Christian and his Bible, by Douglas Johnson, (InterVarsity Fellowship, 144 pp. Cloth, 6/-, Paper 3/6).

These two books have the same object, to induce con-

fidence in the Bible as the written Word of God. Dr. Arnot's is the smaller and slighter of the two. It follows generally familiar lines in its ardent championship of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and is an appeal rather than a treatise.

Mr. Johnson's book is fuller and generally more considerable. Convinced that the Bible is held in light esteem by very many because of ignorance or misunderstanding of what the Bible itself both says and does not say concerning its own nature and purpose, he offers his help on these two points, without laying claim to any particular originality of treatment. He has made an attractive job of it and gathered a great deal of information and illustration based upon wide reading. His point of view may be described as that of the first chapter of the Westminster Confession. Readers who are troubled by many popular difficulties about the Bible will get a great deal of help from the book and may be led to understand that "Christ rules the Church through the sceptre of His Word."

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The Acts of the Apostles, by R. R. Williams, (S.C.M. Press "Torch" Commentaries, 73 pp. 8/6).

Here is an introduction and a running commentary on Luke's second volume from the pen of the Bishop of Leicester, who was previously Principal of St. John's College, Durham. His definition of the main theme of the book, "Nothing can stop the Gospel," provides an excellent approach to it, and there is much that is very helpful in his comments, even though some will probably feel that they might well be more definite on occasion, and that now and then undue deference is paid to unconvincing theories. (For instance, Dr. Williams' view that Luke is throughout working deliberately on a symmetrical parallel with the story of his gospel, which leads him to describe chapters twenty-one to twenty-seven as "St. Paul's Passion Narrative," will seem to many distinctly far-fetched.)

For all its many virtues the book will appear to some to be not quite adequate to the wonderful story with which it is concerned. It may well be true that experience in pioneering missionary work is the first essential qualification for writing a really sufficient commentary on the great story of the early triumphs of the Gospel.

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Paul's letters to his friends, by Hugh Martin. (S.C.M. Press, 32 pp. 9d.)

This admirable little pamphlet is described as "a guide to the epistles" and is intended to fill the gap which exists, rather surprisingly, in the available popular literature about the Bible. It will remove very many of the difficulties which beset and perhaps discourage the ordinary reader, and will make it much easier for him to appreciate the riches of these letters and to listen responsively to the vital, urgent voice which comes ringing across the ages in them.